

PEARLY'S TALE OF HIS TRIP OVER THE ICE.

The Daring Lieutenant Tells the Details of a Perilous Adventure

TO THE READERS OF THE DISPATCH.

Days of Toilsome Trudging and Nights of Wakeful Vigils in a Determined Attempt

TO AID MAP MAKERS OF FUTURE GEOGRAPHIES.

Lough Work for Eight Days, at the End of Which a Fresh Start Had to Be Made by the Voyagers.

Sixty-Four Hours of Sleeplessness During a Terrible Storm—A Genuine Case of Dog Eat Dog—Excellent Caution That Repaid Itself—The Luxury of a Snow Bath—Fall into a Trap That Took Two Days for the Traveler to Dislodge Himself—Warm Weather in the Arctic Region That Seemed Like July.

[SPECIAL TELEGRAM TO THE DISPATCH.]

NEW YORK, Oct. 24.—Lieutenant Peary has written for THE DISPATCH the following account of his expedition to Greenland.

On the last day of April, 1892, in magnificent, bracing weather, the cliffs at the head of McCormick Bay clear cut as canyons through the frosty air. Dr. Cook, Gibson, Astrup, Kionopadu, Tahwanah, Koo-koo and two Eskimo boys, apprentice arrivals of the night before, left Radcliffe, our winter camp, with two sledges and eight dogs dragging the last of the inland ice supplies. Now, three days later, the time had come for me to start.

This was the moment toward which the studies of six years had tended, the mark to which every movement of the preceding year had been directed and made subservient. The countless little things which always crowd last moments of preparation were completed, and my house was put in order.

It was 8 o'clock in the evening when I sent Matt out to tell my huskies, Kionopadu and Tahwanah, to help him get the big dog sledge down over the ice foot and harness the dogs.

The start made in the evening, for during the next three months the usual order of things was to be reversed, and we were to travel by night and sleep by day. My team of 12 great bear dogs, which had been resting for a week since their dash around Ingfield Gulf, were full of life and fire, and I saw by the way they jerked Matt and the huskies down over the ice foot in their dash for the sledge, and the relief with which they pitched into each other when the different factions met, that Matt, skillful as he had become in the use of the whip, would have trouble in getting them down to work for the first mile or two. So I told him to go on and I would overtake him.

A hearty handshake and goodbye to Yerhoef, who wished me the fullest realization of all my hopes, and I turned to say goodbye to my faithful natives, but not one in the settlement was to be seen. Having finished hitching Matt harness the dogs they had vanished into their huts.

Anger That Could Not Be Dared. The Kapetansok was going away, never to return. Powerful as he was the spirits of the Sermitsook, or Great Ice, were more powerful, and no mortal might dare their anger and be seen again by human eyes. They would not say goodbye.

Mrs. Peary was to accompany me to Mill Point, and we followed the sledge tracks in silence for some distance. At first the sound of Matt's voice, the crack of his whip, and the howls of the dogs came clearly through the freezing air. Then a point of the shore came between and silenced them. Radcliffe disappeared behind a hill, and the sun had already dropped behind the northern shore of the bay. We might have been the sole occupants of the earth. I knew how the brave woman by my side was struggling with her fears for me, though hers was to be the harder lot, and I did my best to cheer her. I knew by her final good-bye that I had but partly succeeded. A turn in the shore hid the fur-clad figure, with beautiful Jack crouched by its side, from sight, and I lengthened the stride of my snowshoes to overtake the ice foot.

Scrambling Over the Ice Foot. Four hours later my team was scrambling over the ice foot at the head of the bay. The place where we reached the shore was close to the site of our kitchen camp of last year, and our route to the interior led from here up a steep bluff, some 1,200 feet in height, and then over a succession of terraces to the edge of the great ice cap, four miles distant.

A few moments later my inland ice sledge, which had come up, was lashed on the big dog sledge which was on my back, with Matt following at my heels with a couple of 25-pound tins, we began climbing the bluff. Sharp rocks, with the spaces between them filled with snow, made traveling laborious and slow, and it was about 3 o'clock in the morning when I rose over the edge of the bluff and stumbled upon my boy asleep in the interior led from here up a steep bluff, some 1,200 feet in height, and then over a succession of terraces to the edge of the great ice cap, four miles distant.

A Dangerous Detail Made Out. I said to my men it would seem a dangerous, perhaps foolhardy, thing for two men to strike out upon those unknown regions dependent only upon their own resources and good luck for a safe return, and I offered myself I did not consider it dangerous or difficult. That, however, each man must decide for himself. Dr. Cook was the first to speak, but Gibson and Astrup were close behind me, and I found them looking up the valley that my old friend, the inland ice, was evidently preparing its usual reception for me, the leaden gray clouds rapidly floating above it, giving every indication of an approaching storm.

Curiously enough, both in 1886, when I went on the inland ice, and twice again this year, when I climbed the ice cap, I had been met by furious storms, but eventually everything had turned out well, and so I accepted this as a good omen. Twice again I accepted this as a good omen. Twice again I accepted this as a good omen.

A Hard Job for Two Days. Several steep slopes in the gorge and on the plateau above required all the dogs and our best efforts on each of the larger sledges. Two days were consumed in bringing up to the Cache camp, where Matt and Gibson had built a snow igloo, and where we cooked our meals in a fireplace among the rocks of the mountain, close by the larger sledges. Two days were consumed in bringing up to the Cache camp, where Matt and Gibson had built a snow igloo, and where we cooked our meals in a fireplace among the rocks of the mountain, close by the larger sledges.

During all this time there were signs of coming atmospheric disturbances of more than usual intensity. A precipitation of fine frost crystals intermingled with transient snow squalls; exquisite cloud effects formed and vanished in and over McCormick Bay, while over the inland ice wicked-looking white cumuli grew against a dark, lead-colored sky. The night temperature at this time was 1 degree and 3 degrees below zero. At Cache camp our supplies and equipment were sorted and distributed to the different sledges, and the bear dogs were harnessed to the sledges with our wild wolves, called by courtesy dogs. Restless under their new masters, and fighting constantly among themselves, these brutes gave us not a moment's peace. They would not pass the sledges, and work that one or two did not manage to break their harness or set off their traces, free themselves, and sometimes four or five would be loose at once. It always a work of time and of more or less ingenuity, and frequently resulted in a general muster for repairs at the driver's hands.

Attempt to Make the Next Stage. On the 8th I attempted to make the next stage from Cache camp up the lower slopes of the ice, but a strong wind blowing down from the interior and driving the loose snow in the face of my dogs, discouraged them so completely that we could do nothing with them, and so we were obliged to return to the pleasant weather. Finally we got under way and succeeded in advancing a short stage toward the north side of the first big hummock.

With no sleep for 64 hours I think I tumbled into the igloo. Twelve hours later I awoke to hear the rush of the wind over our shelter and the hiss of the drifting snow against the tent. To capture a few moments when I could stand it no longer, and Gibson and I started for the upper igloo. The igloo was almost completely buried in the snow. Its occupants had not been able to get out of their shelter, and the dogs, restless as always in the wind, had fought with each other and chewed at their harness and traces till half of them were loose and running at will over the sledge and provisions. The rest of the dogs were buried in a huge drift which had formed about them, and as I got nearer I saw that three out of the 20 were victims of the dread pikilukto, or dog disease, and were already nearly dead.

Hard Fighting Against the Wind. As the wind was still blowing with such force that it was impossible to do anything, Gibson and myself crawled in the lee of the igloo, and while waiting for the storm to cease learned from Dr. Cook that they had been unable to get out of their shelter, and the dogs, restless as always in the wind, had fought with each other and chewed at their harness and traces till half of them were loose and running at will over the sledge and provisions. The rest of the dogs were buried in a huge drift which had formed about them, and as I got nearer I saw that three out of the 20 were victims of the dread pikilukto, or dog disease, and were already nearly dead.

At this camp, also, one of my dogs, down with the dog disease, was killed and fed to the others, disproving conclusively the old saying that "dog will not eat dog."

The following day the continuance of the upgrade and the surface showed by the snow compelled us to resort to double-banking, and the end of the day found us but three miles ahead of our last camp. Ourselves tired, and our dogs out of sorts, Astrup and myself started northeast, and were glad to lose ourselves in sleep. The morning found us refreshed and with a new stock of courage, but still I felt that if by hard work and a bit of trouble I could gain ten miles I should be well repaid. To my agreeable surprise the next camp found us 15 miles further on our way, and this without a mishap or hitch throughout the march. We were now evidently on the top of the grade, and could soon expect slight descent on the northern side of the divide, toward the basin of the Petermann Fjord.

The next day proved the truth of these conclusions. The snow surface became harder and harder, the aneroid and the sledges both indicated a gradual descent, and after six hours' merrily we came upon a firm, marble-like surface, showing a dense, most violent wind force, and scored and carved until it looked like a great bed of white lava.

Lead Sighted to the Northwest. Two hours later lead was sighted to the northwest, and after another two hours I called a halt, with a record of 30 miles for the day. On the last day of May we had advanced but five miles, when, as we rose on to the crest of a long hummock, the head of Petermann, with its guarding snow chains and the great basin of the glacier discharging into it, flashed into sight below us. Here we were on the ice bluff, forming the limit of the great glacier basin, just as we had been at Humboldt.

There and remain in that capacity until my return from the inland ice. The snow was so bad after making but a few miles from Camp Separation that the sledges sank in the snow, and the dogs, and this, together with the upgrade from the Humboldt basin, made the hauling so heavy that after a few hours my dogs refused absolutely to work any more, and I was obliged to stop camp. My men and I commenced our regular sledge ration, with a daily allowance of butter and Liebig extract.

A Case of Dog Eat Dog. At this camp, also, one of my dogs, down with the dog disease, was killed and fed to the others, disproving conclusively the old saying that "dog will not eat dog."

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A Day or Two of Beautiful Weather. The weather being so clear, and our location so favorable for observation, I made no attempt to advance further, but I camped as usual and began observations for determining positions and the bearing of the land. In this camp we remained 36 hours, with a continuance of the most perfect weather, warm, clear, and what was most unusual, calm. For two or three hours I used my thermometer in the sun registered 77, and advantage was taken of this to thoroughly dry and air all our clothing, and for myself to enjoy the luxury of a snow bath.

Leaving Camp Petermann and the circling bluffs of the great Petermann glacier basin I kept away due east, parallel with a series of gigantic snow banks, and in places drifts of snow had fallen in, exposing the blue-black depth of the chasm. I tried repeatedly to get an idea from the walls of these cliffs in the ice of the gradient, but from surface snow to melt and thence to true homogeneous ice, but my efforts were thwarted by incrustations of fine snow upon the sides of the crevasses and a luxuriant growth of blue ice crystals, and even icicles. The ten miles to the eastward enabled us to flank all the crevasses, and again I took up my course northward, hoping to find the basin of Sherard Osborn as our fortunate goal. I had weathered Humboldt and Petermann.

At the Summit of the Divide. From Camp Petermann mountains were in sight for 40 miles. Then the aneroid began to show a gradual rise, the snow became softer and deeper, and I knew that we were beginning the ascent of the divide between the Petermann and Sherard Osborn basins. Still we were able to make fairly good progress, and half a march and three full ones brought us to the summit of the divide.

From the divide summit, as in every previous instance, we found the traveling very good, and with the wind behind us we were able to make 19 1/2 and 21 miles respectively in two successive marches, camping in view of Sherard Osborn's mountains. As I expected, on June 8 I had not expected to sight land again so soon, and if the maps were correct it should have taken about two or three days to reach the divide. I was in sight of Sherard Osborn, but assumed that naturally the delineation of the inner portion of Sherard Osborn might be considerably out of latitude, and that what I saw was the Great Sea, and not Sherard Osborn. Future developments showed me that I was wrong, and that St. George's Fjord penetrated farther inland than had been supposed, and that this was what lay before me.

A Rapid Descent, After All. The latter part of the march of June 8 had been through the most difficult and the most dangerous part of the inland ice, which made it impossible to distinguish its relief. I knew, however, not only from my aneroid but from the fact that the sledges traveled, that we were descending quite rapidly, and this, with the occurrence of several patches of bare blue ice, caused me to hesitate and finally call a halt on the completion of the march. As I expected, we could easily have accomplished four or five miles more.

The experiences of the next two weeks showed the wisdom of my cautiousness, and that it would have been better to have had a premonition of trouble still earlier in the day. We had hardly made camp and finished our dinner when the gathering storm broke upon us, and once more we were riving through the snow, and the tarpaulin in lieu of the sledges, myself in the little excavation half covered with a sail, which we called our kitchen. For two days the wind howled above us down the slope toward the divide, and the blinding drifts of snow whirled past our little shelter.

On the Edge of the Glacier Basin. When the storm ceased and we crawled out of the drifts in which both ourselves and our sledges were buried, I saw at a glance that we were right on the southern edge of the central basin of the glacier. The descent to this consisted almost entirely of blue ice, swept clean by the furious wind, and so steep that our sledges would have been unmanageable. The opposite side rose in crevasses and steep-sided ledges, and south steep ice slopes, but fortunately free of crevasses, rose above us. It was evident there was but one thing to do, viz: To climb those cliffs to the southeast, beating the wind and snow, and then to descend and off the ice shore on which we found ourselves.

It took two entire days of the hardest and most discouraging work of the entire journey to get to the edge of the divide, and into which we had fallen, and at the end of the two days we had lost 15 miles of our hard-earned nothing. Steep blue slopes, which had to be scaled in the teeth of a furious wind, and, under the sledges and the harness, Astrup and myself, with constant fall, and necessitated the utmost care to prevent all from being swept into the glacier below.

At last, however, we regained the unbroken snow-clad heights of the inland, and never did I appreciate so fully the old German song, "Ad dem Hohen Ist Brautheit." Once more we could set our course and keep it. In this work Nalegakook, my best dog and king of the team, received a spear wound in his loins, his four feet in a crevasse, and narrowly escaped the loss of Lion and Pau, two of my best dogs. In another crevasse both fell still their traces stopped there, and then hung suspended until hoisted out.

Once back on the upper level of the inland, 6,000 feet above the sea, and with clear weather to help me, I could make out the topography of the surface, and could see the depression of the glacier basin still sweeping away to the eastward. Bearing away to the eastward until I could round this depression, I again started northeast, and from that point on, however, by another group of crevasses, 50 to 100 feet in width, extending across my course, and as luck would have it, just as I reached these a dense fog swept up the glacier basin, and the crevasses, and the crevasses and ourselves in a light which made it dangerous to advance in any direction.

Big Crevasses Had to Be Flanked. The only thing to do was to wait until this cleared away, which was not until 18 hours later. Then a half-hour's reconnaissance enabled me to flank the crevasses and proceed on my course again. By this time Astrup and myself had named the glacier basin which had caused us so much trouble, the bottomless pit, and had grown to hate the sight of the land.

I made up my mind now, in order to avoid further delay and annoyance from those great glacier basins, to strike still farther into the interior, so as to avoid them completely. In attempting to carry out this plan, however, I found the snow increasing in depth so rapidly and the steep face of the inland ice rising at such a pace that I abandoned my plan, and finally gave up in favor of a more northerly course. We had hardly made four miles in this direction, when once more the big ledge, the bottomless pit, showed its ugly face, and the last eight days, broke down again, and we lost an entire day in repairing and relaying it and restoring its lead.

All the Dogs at One Sledge. The first drop in temperature was eagerly noted, and myself assisted, and with the dogs at one sledge, we succeeded with double banking in advancing 6 1/2 miles. The following day the going was much better, but hard work, and well straightened out before the land, this time in the shores of Sherard Osborn, rose into view ahead of us, and once more I found myself compelled to deflect first to the north and then to the east.

Night found us 16 1/2 miles to our credit, and another great glacier basin yet to be weathered. An idea of the next day can perhaps be best obtained from an extract from my journal.

Another discouraging day within sight of the beautiful shores of this Arctic Sahara, but we are on the heights once for good, I hope. It had been my intention to make a detour if there is any truth in the superstition of the evil eye, the coasts of this inland ice were all very high. Just as long as the black cliffs peer up at us over the round of the ice cap, just so long are we beset with all sorts of horrors, and the more the wind stirs, the more the horrors multiply. The dogs seem possessed with devils, the sledges and traces are broken, something or other of our equipment is sure to be lost, and everything seems to go wrong. I am not a superstitious man, but I am a weather-light, little drift—in a word, peace and comfort. The intolerable drift of the snow is a constant annoyance, and, as it beats under and through every minute aperture of the tarpaulin, and makes a hell of a noise, and the noise of one of my best dogs, Castor, was dead lame one leg and unable to pull, and the traces were fully laden and frozen into the drift at the hitching post.

Only Eight Miles of Headway. We had advanced but eight miles when we found ourselves hemmed in by a series of high, jagged, and very steep cliffs. The day was spent in reconnoitering for safe snow bridges by which they could be crossed. This could be done only in a westerly direction, and night found us further west than we were in the morning. Once two of my dogs were down in a crevasse, and once the little sledge, with all our biscuits and 100 pounds of pemmican, broke through, and but for a projection of ice on the edge of the crevasse, which temporarily supported it till Astrup and myself could pull it out of danger, we should have lost all.

At night, a feeling of relief at being again on the heights was as it were, very such a thing were possible, to even sounder sleep than usual, and 5 1/2 hours of refreshing slumber put a hungry brain and body in better form, and gave everything a very different aspect.

During this march we covered 18 1/2 miles over a snow surface, which every now and then, as we marched along, settled slightly beneath our weight, and a sound ringing in the ears of the wind, and the breaking in calm summer days on the beach at Seabright or Long Branch, or on long white Caribbean beaches backed by palms and waving palms, and a very different aspect.

A Mild Attack of the Blues Confessed. The next day, although we covered 18 miles, both Astrup and myself had a mild attack of the blues, partly because we were obliged to buckle down and help the dogs all day, but principally, I think, because, with almost no rest, and a march of 20 miles again. The next day, however, we once more got in the swim and closed our record that night with 20 1/2 miles, lead being in the north-west, north and north-north-east all day.

The moral effect of our better going and our better speed was very perceptible, both on ourselves and our dogs. At times the lead was so light that we could march as if we were on a trot, and we had been marching but a short time when I heard Astrup singing merrily as he kept along beside the sledge. During the march the sun seemed unusually warm, and we were all in good spirits, and we were to throw off all our outer garments.

The following day was but a repetition of the last, and we skipped merrily along on our march, and the elevation of about 6,000 feet, the mountains visible to the northwest nearly all the time.

All Alone in the March of Spirits. At the close of this march we turned in the best of spirits. We had again made our 20 miles, and there was every indication that we had now reached all our objectives and would have plain sailing for the rest of our journey. The temperature had become so high that at this camp I seized the opportunity to take another refreshing snow bath and to wash my dogskin and deerskin suits for my reserve of sealskin.

At this camp, also, one of my dogs, down with the dog disease, was killed and fed to the others, disproving conclusively the old saying that "dog will not eat dog."

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Ourselves tired, and our dogs out of sorts, Astrup and myself started northeast, and were glad to lose ourselves in sleep. The morning found us refreshed and with a new stock of courage, but still I felt that if by hard work and a bit of trouble I could gain ten miles I should be well repaid.

To my agreeable surprise the next camp found us 15 miles further on our way, and this without a mishap or hitch throughout the march. We were now evidently on the top of the grade, and could soon expect slight descent on the northern side of the divide, toward the basin of the Petermann Fjord.

The next day proved the truth of these conclusions. The snow surface became harder and harder, the aneroid and the sledges both indicated a gradual descent, and after six hours' merrily we came upon a firm, marble-like surface, showing a dense, most violent wind force, and scored and carved until it looked like a great bed of white lava.

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Big Crevasses Had to Be Flanked. The only thing to do was to wait until this cleared away, which was not until 18 hours later. Then a half-hour's reconnaissance enabled me to flank the crevasses and proceed on my course again. By this time Astrup and myself had named the glacier basin which had caused us so much trouble, the bottomless pit, and had grown to hate the sight of the land.

I made up my mind now, in order to avoid further delay and annoyance from those great glacier basins, to strike still farther into the interior, so as to avoid them completely. In attempting to carry out this plan, however, I found the snow increasing in depth so rapidly and the steep face of the inland ice rising at such a pace that I abandoned my plan, and finally gave up in favor of a more northerly course. We had hardly made four miles in this direction, when once more the big ledge, the bottomless pit, showed its ugly face, and the last eight days, broke down again, and we lost an entire day in repairing and relaying it and restoring its lead.

All the Dogs at One Sledge. The first drop in temperature was eagerly noted, and myself assisted, and with the dogs at one sledge, we succeeded with double banking in advancing 6 1/2 miles. The following day the going was much better, but hard work, and well straightened out before the land, this time in the shores of Sherard Osborn, rose into view ahead of us, and once more I found myself compelled to deflect first to the north and then to the east.

Night found us 16 1/2 miles to our credit, and another great glacier basin yet to be weathered. An idea of the next day can perhaps be best obtained from an extract from my journal.

Another discouraging day within sight of the beautiful shores of this Arctic Sahara, but we are on the heights once for good, I hope. It had been my intention to make a detour if there is any truth in the superstition of the evil eye, the coasts of this inland ice were all very high. Just as long as the black cliffs peer up at us over the round of the ice cap, just so long are we beset with all sorts of horrors, and the more the wind stirs, the more the horrors multiply. The dogs seem possessed with devils, the sledges and traces are broken, something or other of our equipment is sure to be lost, and everything seems to go wrong. I am not a superstitious man, but I am a weather-light, little drift—in a word, peace and comfort. The intolerable drift of the snow is a constant annoyance, and, as it beats under and through every minute aperture of the tarpaulin, and makes a hell of a noise, and the noise of one of my best dogs, Castor, was dead lame one leg and unable to pull, and the traces were fully laden and frozen into the drift at the hitching post.

Only Eight Miles of Headway. We had advanced but eight miles when we found ourselves hemmed in by a series of high, jagged, and very steep cliffs. The day was spent in reconnoitering for safe snow bridges by which they could be crossed. This could be done only in a westerly direction, and night found us further west than we were in the morning. Once two of my dogs were down in a crevasse, and once the little sledge, with all our biscuits and 100 pounds of pemmican, broke through, and but for a projection of ice on the edge of the crevasse, which temporarily supported it till Astrup and myself could pull it out of danger, we should have lost all.

At night, a feeling of relief at being again on the heights was as it were, very such a thing were possible, to even sounder sleep than usual, and 5 1/2 hours of refreshing slumber put a hungry brain and body in better form, and gave everything a very different aspect.

During this march we covered 18 1/2 miles over a snow surface, which every now and then, as we marched along, settled slightly beneath our weight, and a sound ringing in the ears of the wind, and the breaking in calm summer days on the beach at Seabright or Long Branch, or on long white Caribbean beaches backed by palms and waving palms, and a very different aspect.

A Mild Attack of the Blues Confessed. The next day, although we covered 18 miles, both Astrup and myself had a mild attack of the blues, partly because we were obliged to buckle down and help the dogs all day, but principally, I think, because, with almost no rest, and a march of 20 miles again. The next day, however, we once more got in the swim and closed our record that night with 20 1/2 miles, lead being in the north-west, north and north-north-east all day.

The moral effect of our better going and our better speed was very perceptible, both on ourselves and our dogs. At times the lead was so light that we could march as if we were on a trot, and we had been marching but a short time when I heard Astrup singing merrily as he kept along beside the sledge. During the march the sun seemed unusually warm, and we were all in good spirits, and we were to throw off all our outer garments.

The following day was but a repetition of the last, and we skipped merrily along on our march, and the elevation of about 6,000 feet, the mountains visible to the northwest nearly all the time.

All Alone in the March of Spirits. At the close of this march we turned in the best of spirits. We had again made our 20 miles, and there was every indication that we had now reached all our objectives and would have plain sailing for the rest of our journey. The temperature had become so high that at this camp I seized the opportunity to take another refreshing snow bath and to wash my dogskin and deerskin suits for my reserve of sealskin.

At this camp, also, one of my dogs, down with the dog disease, was killed and fed to the others, disproving conclusively the old saying that "dog will not eat dog."

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The following day the continuance of the upgrade and the surface showed by the snow compelled us to resort to double-banking, and the end of the day found us but three miles ahead of our last camp.

Ourselves tired, and our dogs out of sorts, Astrup and myself started northeast, and were glad to lose ourselves in sleep. The morning found us refreshed and with a new stock of courage, but still I felt that if by hard work and a bit of trouble I could gain ten miles I should be well repaid.

To my agreeable surprise the next camp found us 15 miles further on our way, and this without a mishap or hitch throughout